

Garage Chatter

Turfgrass diseases have run rampant this summer in our local area, so it might be a good idea to review the latest information put out by the Southern California Turfgrass Council in cooperation with the University of California at Los Angeles.

The causes of turfgrass diseases are many and varied. Normal growth of these grasses may be affected or influenced by their specific adaptability to environment conditions, a deficiency or excess of plant foods, presence of disease inducing organisms, or injurious cultural practices or conditions. The avoidance or correction of these conditions may give satisfactory control of a majority of the trouble.

The accumulation of clippings or partially decayed old leaves on the soil surface around the crowns of grass plants results in a spongy turf. This build-up of organic matter is called "thatch" and can be the source of a great deal of trouble as disease organisms can grow and thrive here, it prevents the soil from drying out when wet and restricts or prevents air movement to the grass roots, without which they cannot live or function properly. When the surface of thatch dries out, it resists wetting and actually sheds water, this in turn may prevent proper chemical controls of insects and pests penetrating into the root of the grass. The build up of thatch should be avoided by proper cultural methods.

Irrigation and drainage are important. An overly wet soil condition not only favors some disease causing organisms, but also weakens the grass plants making them more susceptible to attack. Excessive moisture also robs the root area of oxygen, retards the growth and function of the grass roots, causes a humid condition in the thatch, and if there is much traffic during these wet periods compaction can result.

Diseases of turfgrasses are sometimes due to a lack of nutrient food materials or of essential minor elements. It is necessary here to apply only moderate amounts as some diseases run rampant in underfed turf while others, such as brown patch, will be more severe in turf that has been liberally fertilized with a high nitrogenous food.

Turf injury that may be mistaken for a fungus disease may be due to smog or fumes from a nearby chemical plant or factory. Annual bluegrass is very susceptible and even Bermuda grass is adversely affected.

Mechanical injuries may make grass more susceptible to disease and even under favorable conditions even the cuts made in mowing the grass become infected by fungus organisms. In moist weather the grass should be allowed to dry before being mowed. The application of fungicides should be made after mowing the turf.

Just as a simple headache remedy will not cure all human ills, no single chemical treatment will control all turfgrass diseases. Satisfactory control will depend upon proper cultural methods, proper seed selection for the environment and the trial use of various fungicides until the proper one for your specific trouble is found.

Aircraft Company Official in Hynd

Harold G. Hynd, new vice president and general manager of the El Segundo Division of Douglas Aircraft, underwent an emergency appendectomy at St. John's Hospital in Santa Monica late Tuesday morning. He was reported recovering satisfactorily yesterday.

Hynd was assigned to head up the El Segundo Division—which includes the huge Torrance plant—on Sept. 1. He had previously held a like position at the company's Tulsa Division.

City to Get Second Safety Inventory Data

Findings on the city's second traffic inventory will be disclosed at a special meeting in the city hall council chambers here next Tuesday afternoon by the National Safety Council. The meeting will begin at 2 p.m.

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